

State of North Carolina

Department of Justice

Roy Cooper, Attorney General

January 16, 2013

The Hon. Pat McCrory, Governor State of North Carolina 20301 Mail Service Center Raleigh, N. C. 27699-0301

Via: Fax

Dear Governor McCrory:

I am writing to thank you for your public pledge to prioritize efforts to prevent violence in our schools and to offer assistance.

In 2006, after several violent incidents around the country, I led a task force that recommended a number of common-sense measures that North Carolina could take to improve safety. In 2007, following the tragic shooting at Virginia Tech, I convened a task force to recommend similar measures for colleges and universities. I have enclosed copies of the executive summaries of these reports for your information. The full reports can be found at http://www.ncdoi.gov/schoolsafety.aspx.

These recommendations remain relevant, and in fact, a number were put into place. However some have languished, such as the anonymous tip line and state assistance for school safety protocols. Also gone is the Center for the Prevention of School Violence, which had partnered with us on the task force. Finally, and maybe most importantly, we need more School Resource Officers to help keep children safe at school.

Specifically, North Carolina needs:

- More School Resource Officers in schools to provide security and guide students to safe behavior;
- To reestablish a statewide school tip line for parents and students to report threats anonymously;
- More training for educators on how to recognize potential safety threats and respond to them; and
- To reestablish the Center for the Prevention of School Violence.

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My office previously worked with the Center for the Prevention of School Violence to develop a school safety plan that is still serving as a model today. Implementation of our plan included distributing safety kits to every public, private and charter school in the state, and many schools still use them today.

The plan also implemented providing Rapid Deployment Training to law enforcement. Our North Carolina Justice Academy has trained 836 officers to serve as Rapid Deployment trainers since 2001. In 2006, the training was given to all North Carolina law enforcement through BLET. The Academy also teaches a course to train School Resource Officers and others on how to respond alone to an active shooter situation. Since July 2010, 54 officers have attended this course, a number we would like to increase.

This Rapid Deployment Training showed its effectiveness in 2006 when a shooter opened fire at Orange County High School near Hillsborough. A School Resource Officer and another officer used this training to subdue the shooter before anyone at the school was killed.

I know you share with me the concern that a critical incident could endanger lives in North Carolina and that we must do all we can to prepare. As you continue to examine this issue, please do not hesitate to call on me and our staff for assistance.

With kind regards, I am

Very truly yours,

Roy Cooper

RAC/sm

Enclosures